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ABSTRACT

Seven model family literacy programs in Illinois were monitored for one year to determine successful program components and characteristics and to assist local programs in developing and implementing practical evaluation systems. Six were networking programs each of which involved several agencies, and one program was designed on a center-based model. During the study year, all of the programs experienced staff turnovers or reductions. No program made radical changes to its components. The programs generally experienced growth; however, funding reductions forced one program to reduce its services drastically. Four programs expanded into new sites. All of the programs experimented with new curricula or innovative programming ideas. At one program, families participated in a unique computer workshop conducted in Spanish. Another program worked to increase children's access to books and men's involvement in family literacy activities through "make and take nights" featuring activities such as bookshelf making. Other innovative activities at individual project included training college students to conduct home outreach and conducting a one-day course to build self-esteem and nurture adults' needs within families. (This document includes descriptions of the individual programs and program summaries. Selected program evaluation questionnaires are appended.) (MN)

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ED 367 860

**FAMILY
LITERACY
REPORT**

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INTRODUCTION

In 1989, the Illinois Literacy Resource Development Center was commissioned by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Illinois State Board of Education - Adult Education and Literacy Section, and the Chicago Tribune Charities to conduct an exploratory investigation of family literacy programs in Illinois. The investigation consisted of an intensive twelve month review of family literacy programs in Illinois as well as exhaustive research and development focused on program design and evaluation. The findings from the initial year of the project are described in *The Mechanics of Success for Families, Family Literacy Report #1* and *Evaluation, Report #2*.

The second phase of the project, which began in June, 1990, was designed to track the development of six model family literacy programs. Specifically, the project objectives were to:

- describe program progress through year 2;
- determine successful components and characteristics of the family literacy programs; and
- assist local programs in developing and implementing practical evaluation systems.

This report summarizes the work conducted during phase two of the family literacy project.

PROGRAM PROGRESS/DEVELOPMENT

Methodology

Program progress was measured at the model sites using qualitative research methods. These methods included:

1. program coordinator and student questionnaires (attachment 1);
2. structured open-ended interviews;
3. conversational interviews; and
4. on-site observations.

To ensure consistency, these research methods were used for both phases of the project.

Seven of the original 19 family literacy sites surveyed in 1989 were chosen to participate in phase two of the project. This support came from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Sites were selected based on response to a selection form mailed to all 19 sites (attachment 2). Programs were offered a \$2000 incentive grant to participate in this project. Seven programs expressed interest in the project, all were accepted. The seven model sites are: CHOICES/Project READ, Rantoul; Ready for Reading/Rend Lake College, Ina; Literacy

Connection/John A. Logan College, Carterville; Bright Futures/Stone Early Childhood Center, Galesburg; PALS/Joliet Jr. College, Joliet; Family Literacy Project/Prairie State College, Chicago Heights; Reach Out and Read (ROAR), Chicago. Data was collected on program design and implementation during both phase of the project. The information from each site was then compared to determine changes in program structure, services, curricula, and funding and support. Analysis of the data took place over a five month period.

Findings

The seven model sites are diverse in their program philosophies, designs, populations served, development level, and funding. Despite these differences, the programs can be categorized according to the structures described in *The Mechanics of Success*. Six of the sites are networking programs -- several agencies are involved in the provision of family literacy services and one program is a center-based model -- all services are provided at one site, by one agency.

The programs all experienced significant changes over the year. One-hundred percent of the model sites were subject to staff turnover or reduction. One program, for example, had three different people in charge of their family literacy project throughout the 24 month period of the study. Two other programs had a change of administrators. Two programs had to cut positions entirely; and the final two programs lost important staff members.

None of the programs made radical changes to the components offered, although CHOICES was required to drastically reduce service due to a lack of funding. For the most part, however, the programs experienced growth. Of greatest importance was an expansion of the network of providers each site worked with. The networking programs, in particular, spent a substantial amount of staff time in identifying, establishing, and maintaining relationships with Head Start, Even Start, Pre-Kindergarten, and social service programs. At one site, all interested providers were called together and a directory of family literacy services was produced.

Four programs moved or expanded into new sites. The Literacy Connection staff moved several times and was finally able to settle in a family literacy center of its own. Three other sites were motivated by requests from cooperating agencies to expand their services in new territory. Only one program, CHOICES, was forced to drop a site.

All the programs experimented with new curricula or innovative programming ideas. In Chicago Heights, families participated in a unique computer workshop conducted in Spanish. The computer workshop was notable for two reasons: 1. it emphasized critical thinking skills by putting participants in charge of programming,

and 2. it provided an opportunity for limited English proficient adults to work on the computer, without being hindered by language.

Faced with the need to downsize, CHOICES staff designed the "Read to Me" program. Parents keep a reading log and for each six books read to their child they choose a book to keep. This program is not staff intensive and has been successful in increasing the use of the shelter library.

Bright Futures hoped to increase children's access to books and mens involvement in family literacy activities through make and take nights. A majority of men attended the bookshelf making night.

ROAR, John A. Logan and Ready for Reading all found new ways to recruit participants. ROAR hired a vista volunteer to do home outreach. John A. Logan staff trained college students to bring information about their programs directly to people's doors. Ready for Reading conducted literacy "events" (story telling, book reading) at community outreach centers.

Joliet Jr. College continued to use experts to aid them in the design of their programs. This year, two social workers were contracted with to produce "Growing Parents," a one-day course which builds self-esteem and nurtures the adults needs within the family.

Descriptions of the individual programs and program summaries follow,

Program Description of Bright Futures in Galesburg

"Don't bore kids, work with parents, treat the kids and parents fairly, demonstrate excellent practices, work with the total family, and take away excuses about schooling," are the guiding principles of Bright Futures, according to Maury Lyon, principal at Stone School's Bright Futures Family Literacy Program.

Bright Futures was born on February 14, 1986. Today, the family literacy program is providing literacy enrichment services to its sixth group of children between the ages of 3 and 4. The early childhood special education program, another part of the overall program, has been housed at the at-risk program for five years. The two programs are beginning to integrate their efforts.

During 1990-1991, Bright Futures delivered services to six sections of four year old children, and to three year old children at three sites in the public housing district. The four year old children attend classes four times a week for half days while the three year old children attend classes three times a week for half days.

The activities of the prekindergarten enrichment classes are based on the High Scope curriculum. Many of the activities include the teacher choosing a book to read to the children. The book and resulting activities are tied to an overall theme chosen by the teacher. Many of the books are modeled upon the "Little Books" developed by Janna Mason at the Center for the Study of Reading. After the book is read, it is sent home with the child. The theme is carried out through additional activities or key experiences chosen by the children and teachers. For example, when the book "The Three Bears" was read, the teacher planned "key experiences" (activities) in seriation, sorting, and classification using different colored toy bears. Activities are also integrated in science, math, and language. Teachers, children and parents also take field trips that relate to the theme or unit. The teachers encourage active and child initiated learning. Teachers also conduct activities based on a principle from the High Scope curriculum: the plan, work, and recall sequence.

Another component of Bright Futures include home visits where the teacher visits the parent and child at home to demonstrate a lesson and leave a toy or homemade activity with the family. Sometimes the teacher will take the family to the library or to a location in the community that provides a service of need to the family. The teacher remains flexible, focusing these visits and activities on the immediate needs of the family. Each teacher has one day a week to make home visits.

In other pre-kindergarten programs in the county, the philosophy of home visits differs. As the programs are new, the value of home visits has been demonstrated to teachers and administrators. In the rural areas, GED classes are not available. The number of adults in need of ABE or GED classes is not known.

However, with the Bright Futures programs, 34 of the 100 parents have not finished high school. Therefore, adult education classes and volunteer tutoring is available for the parents. At the beginning of the school semester, the adult education classes were full, however many of the parents left the classes with few remaining at the end of the semester. Retention of parents in the adult education classes is a concern of the staff at Bright Futures and an area in which they want to improve. Since prekindergarten classes are available for their children, and the parents may ride the bus with their children to school, many of the obstacles preventing parents to attend classes seem to be removed. Daycare is also available for younger siblings. However, prekindergarten teachers are quick to point out that many of the parents are facing multiple problems related to their basic survival such as housing, food for their family, etc. and perhaps these more pressing problems are preventing them from remaining with the classes. Many of the parents are young, ranging in age from 16 to 18.

Another valuable component to Bright Futures is the parent-teacher resource center. This center offers a variety of services including workshops for parents, other community members, and DCFS daycare workers; "make and take" suggestions and work area; a "mini" store where items are for sale such as crayons, glue, etc.; books and toys for checking out; access to a laminating machine; and resource books and video tapes for parents and teachers. The center is open during school hours and for one evening a week and one Saturday of each month. A resource staff person is available to assist parents and teachers. The resource center is open to all community members.

Bright Futures principal, Maury Lyon, would like to expand their job training aspect of their program. Presently, two students work for the school through a JTPA youth program. One student is a custodian at the school; the other student is a teacher aide in the classroom for the three year old children. Though the idea of providing job training for parents is a good one, Maury is concerned that there might not be enough jobs at the school for parents. Additionally, he thinks that there might not be enough space in the school to accommodate the parents who would be participating in some type of a job training program.

Two other parts of the Bright Futures program include classes for homebound teenagers who are pregnant or have just given birth and child development classes for community college students.

Bright Futures has also expanded its efforts by working with the local Head Start program. As both the Head Start and prekindergarten program provide activities to children for only half days, Bright Futures prekindergarten program has provided funding to staff the Head Start program for the rest of the day so one class of children can attend classes for a full day.

Bright Futures is fortunate to have a curriculum coordinator who assists with curriculum development and teacher training. Special guidance is given to the teachers to adapt the High Scope curriculum. The coordinator also observes in the classroom, makes suggestions to the teachers but does not "dictate" to them, and meets with the different groups of teachers each week. Once a month all of the prekindergarten staff gather together for a county-wide workshop or group discussion.

The assessment used to identify children eligible for the prekindergarten enrichment program is the Chicago Early Assessment. Additionally, the COR, Child Observation Record, is used to determine children's goals. By combining information from the Chicago Early Assessment and teacher observations, four or five goals are developed for the children and shared with the parents during the parent/teacher conference. Children's progress is tracked through the CAR, Child anecdotal records where the teacher observes children's learning and writes comments on the record form.

Other parent activities include special activity nights which occur once a month. At the "Big Guy and Me" night, fathers and children made bookshelves for their home. There are also a "Lady and Me" and "Grandparents" night activities. Attendance at three parenting activities are required of the parents.

Bright Futures represents an innovative family literacy program in west central rural Illinois. The staff would like to expand their program to provide quality services to meet the needs of families in Galesburg.

FAMILY LITERACY SURVEY SUMMARY

Program Name: Bright Futures

Student Population:

- families of children attending the Stone Early Education Center

Recruitment Methods:

- mandatory attendance of parents at three family activity nights
- home visits

Staff Structure:

- paid instructors for children and adults
- volunteer literacy coordinator housed on site
- curriculum coordinator

Curriculum:

- GED curriculum
- understanding your child's behavior, communication and discipline vs. punishment are topics of parenting classes
- High Scope

Program Components:

- Adult
- Child
- Adult and Child

Program Activities:

- Pre-Kindergarten enrichment classes
- parent-child activities at home
- one-to-one tutoring
- resource room open to parents and teachers

Male Involvement:

- make-and-take bookshelves activity has been highly successful in attracting men

Ideas Suggested:

- teach thematically
- give teachers one day a week to conduct home visits
- get parents working in the building when possible
- provide educational activities for homebound, pregnant teens

PROJECT READ/CHOICES
YEAR 2

This year has been a difficult one for the staff and participants of the CHOICES program. Funding cuts have forced services to be significantly curtailed. Until September 1990, funding was available to have the Educational Services Coordinator (ESC) on site daily, since that date the Educational Services Coordinators have volunteered at the sites once a week. This cut in funding and consequently time has made it difficult to offer comprehensive services at the sites. Each week, the ESC spends a significant amount of time re-establishing her relationship with the staff and residents at the shelter. Because building and maintaining trust is such a significant issue in working with this population, the funding difficulties have been especially frustrating for all involved.

A small infusion of money presently allows the CHOICES ESC, Sherry Langendorf, to be on site two days a week at A Women's Place. A Women's Place is a temporary sanctuary for victims of domestic violence. While at the shelter, Langendorf works individually with women who request her help. According to Langendorf "Without being there every day, the clients and staff don't know me. Each week I may be introducing myself to an entirely new group of women at the shelter. Sometimes it takes most of my time there to establish a comfort level."

Once Langendorf reintroduces herself, she makes herself accessible to residents with educational or social service questions. Adults are worked with individually or in small groups. Services are tailored specifically to meet the needs of the resident. If the resident is interested in finding a job, the Educational Services Coordinator will go through the jobs ads with her, take her to the employment security office, discuss interviewing techniques, or show her a computer program that aids in resume writing.

Children at the shelter also receive individual and small group attention from the Educational Services Coordinator and from trained volunteers. Activities for the children include book reading, play groups, and opportunities to work on the computer. There are specifically tailored activities for "differently-abled" children.

Parents and children participate together in the "Read to Me" program. For this activity, parents keep a reading log. For each six books read to their child, the parent-child team can choose a book to keep. Residents can borrow books from the shelter library or, if they have a card, from the local library. The gift books come from donations and are kept at the shelter.

Computer activities are generally done by parents and children together. Children are not allowed to use the computer

unsupervised and this encourages the adults to become involved with their children's computer learning activities. Parents are also given materials and information about child development. Finally, shelter staff, the ESC, and volunteers all work very hard to model parenting and reading skills.

Recruitment of adults and children into educational activities has become a more difficult obstacle because of the limited number of hours the ESC is on site. To inform them of the services available, all residents are given a packet of information which includes a listing of adult education programs in the area, educational services available to the women and their children, a bus map, and a listing of social services provided in the area. The packet also includes some of the basic tools of literacy -- paper and pencil. There is a separate packet for adults and children together. This packet includes information on reading together and activities parents can do to help their children with homework and reading development.

Although the funding situation remains tenuous, the goal of the CHOICES program remains the same -- to give shelter residents information so that they can make informed decisions and set a path for educational opportunity. To do this, CHOICES staff will continue to offer individual, client-directed services to the moms and children at the shelters served.

FAMILY LITERACY SURVEY SUMMARY

Program Name: CHOICES

Student Population:

- families (women and their children) at a women's shelter

Recruitment Methods:

- informational materials given to residents upon entry into the shelter
- special group nights/game night
- referrals

Staff Structure:

- one part-time educational services coordinator (ESC)
- literacy coordinator for oversight
- volunteers

Curriculum:

- individualized according to participant request
- computer assisted instruction
- CHOICES manual

Program Components:

- individualized according to request, may include:
 - Adult, Child, Adult and Child, Economic Self-sufficiency, Family Support Services

Program Activities:

- individualized consultation with the ESC
- "Read to Me" program
- referrals to local social service agencies
- developmentally appropriate educational activities

Male Involvement:

- none - the site is a women's shelter

Ideas Suggested:

- with this population, focus on the pre-learning stage
- avoid the "do-gooder" attitude - listen to participants' personal goals and agendas
- be sure to earn the trust of the staff at the shelter
- train volunteers to work with special populations (i.e., "literacy" volunteers participate in training provided by the shelter staff)
- when providing individualized services, act as a link or resource person
- provide a social activity to engage participants in the educational program

PALS

Joliet Junior College

The PALS program of the Joliet Junior College Center for Adult Basic Education and Literacy (JJC CABEL) stresses intergenerational literacy skills enhancement using diverse strategies including storytelling and dramatic play to build vocabulary, context comprehension and other concepts. The program looks at the home as a place for reading for adults and children and encourages families to look at their homes in this way.

PALS is implemented in pre-school daycare programs such as HeadStart. Depending on the structure of the pre-school, the program runs for four to six weeks. The pre-school directors and instructors are trained and then the information is presented in three sessions to the adults and children in the pre-school program. The training is provided by JJC CABEL through the efforts of an educational consultant/reading specialist. Parent volunteers assist teachers in the classroom.

The Center offers other programs, projects and services that help to bring adults and children together in the learning process. The Read Along Club provides opportunities for families in area community centers and housing projects. Presently JJC CABEL is looking for someone to provide 3 hours of training as a community service presentation for organizations that cannot participate in the larger programs. The Center has received this type of request from the community and is working toward tailoring its programs and services to meet the expressed needs of the area. JJC CABEL also does some curriculum development to better address the needs of the people they serve. A parenting skills workshop has been created for parents only to address their specific needs as parents.

A videotape has been produced about the PALS program. It documents a session with adults and children making their own books based on a field trip they took together. Sharing with the group, the parent tells how the book was made with their child and then the child "reads" the storybook to the group. JJC CABEL continues to participate in a joint program with the Altrusa Society which puts books on tape for families. The books and the taped stories are given to the adults and children.

The PALS program has previously implemented some evaluation procedures. A needs assessment was done and evaluations were completed after each session the last time the program ran. There is an interest in structuring the evaluation process using other evaluation tools. The tools chosen were a monthly progress report, an anecdotal record form, teacher questionnaire, parent interview form, an evaluation form for project directors, child questionnaire and parent evaluation.

The attention given to needs assessment, training and curriculum development in the PALS program and the other projects/services given through JJC CABEL for adults and children seem to be the strength of its efforts. The Center is at this time attempting to document this fact as it continues to create services and assist families with the learning process.

FAMILY LITERACY SURVEY SUMMARY

Program Name: Joliet Junior College

Student Population:

- "low income adult parents with high risk children"
- 100% Hispanic and African-American females

Recruitment Methods:

- referrals from target pre-schools
- flyers, letters
- personal contact with project coordinator

Staff Structure:

- educational consultants
- trainer
- program coordinator

Curriculum:

- program curriculum designed by Educational Consultants
- teacher inservice designed by Educational Consultants

Program Components:

- Adults as Teachers
- Adult
- Child

Program Activities:

- Teacher inservice done by consultant, followed by parent inservice done by teachers
- parent and child supervised reading sessions
- parenting skills workshop
- donation of books on tape

Male Involvement:

- a male-oriented component is being considered

Ideas Suggested:

- provide expert information to parents by hiring a consultant
- provide parent support sessions
- place emphasis on culturally-sensitive books and materials
- demonstrate techniques that non-reading parents can use to enjoy reading and stories with their children
- provide books on tape
- stress active involvement of children in adult-child activities, this sparks parents' interest
- choose instructors that participants can identify with

THE LITERACY CONNECTION - JOHN A. LOGAN COLLEGE
YEAR 2

Staff at The Literacy Connection based at John A. Logan College have been on the move this year. The program's central office has moved to a new location on campus and a satellite family learning center opened its doors in October. If all goes well, the family learning center may be moving yet again--to a bigger location with better facilities.

Nevertheless, implementation of the Families Connecting for Learning program has been temporarily delayed. The foundation of the program is the nearly complete family mentoring guidebook. The guidebook is designed to be used by both the family mentor and the family members themselves in a unique whole-family, home-centered, competency-based model of family literacy. The guidebook lays out the program philosophy and goals, suggests informal assessment techniques, and provides "case-studies" of learning activities which families may engage in. These materials all support the ultimate goal of the program -- to inspire families to discover and develop their own learning patterns.

After an initial orientation to the program, families will identify five literacy related competencies which they are interested in. Together with the mentor, the family will plan and conduct learning activities in each of the five competency areas. The learning activities will involve all members of the family at their individual learning levels and pace. Young children will be included in the process through play, stories, and other creative activities.

When the guidebook is complete, there will be a pilot stage during which several families will take part in the program. Throughout the pilot stage, the families, mentors, and staff will be involved in assessment and revision of the guidebook and program. When the guidebook is finalized, all of The Literacy Connection's tutors will be trained in the methodology.

Although the guidebook is not yet finished, the family literacy staff of The Literacy Connection has incorporated the goals and philosophy of the program into the tutoring they presently provide. Families are encouraged to take control of their own learning and view the learning process as a family activity. Intergenerational exchange and peer tutoring are encouraged in order to promote positive educational interactions. In addition, the staff is experimenting with family learning groups where peer interaction and learning activities center around a specific topic (e.g. child management).

The staff continues to strengthen their outreach network through linkages to Head Start, Pre-K, and Even Start programs. Two other recruitment tools are being tested. The first involves the brainchild of Betty Neely--book bags for children. The book bags

are sewed by volunteers, filled with children's books and information on adult education programs, and given out to children. The child's family thus receives a tangible gift-- books and a book bag--and information about the adult education programs in their area. The second recruitment method involves training outreach volunteers to do home visits at public housing areas and describe The Literacy Connection's program. Students from an honor society at John A. Logan College and a fraternity at SIUC have volunteered to be part of this effort. Already, these efforts have resulted in a significant increase in family referrals.

FAMILY LITERACY SURVEY SUMMARY

Program Name: Literacy Connection

Student Population:

- residents of John A. Logan Community College district in rural Illinois
- primarily low income families

Recruitment Methods:

- referrals from Pre-Kindergarten, At Risk and Head Start programs
- home visits by trained volunteers

Staff Structure:

- Family Literacy Coordinator
- peer mentors (to-be-trained)

Curriculum:

- guidebook for family and mentor (in process)

Program Components:

- individualized education program for each family

Program Activities:

- individualized activities - families choose five competency areas to work in and activities are created to compliment these areas

Male Involvement:

- encouraged as a whole family event

Ideas Suggested:

- put control of learning process into the hand of the individual families
- encourage family members to share their writing and learning experiences with each other
- support peer tutoring as well as tutoring among generations

PRAIRIE STATE COLLEGE FAMILY LITERACY PROJECT

The Prairie State College Family Literacy Project relies on the spirit of cooperation and networking to get its work accomplished. The family literacy project continues to use the network of Prairie State College and School Districts 170 and 163. The project is now serving two of the eleven schools in its area and is considering the ramifications of expansion. Three times a year all members of the network working with the family literacy project meet with other service providers like CETA, Public Aid, the Public Health Department, Head Start and others. This body is referred to as the Family Enrichment/Family Literacy Advisory Committee.

The previous family literacy coordinator is now the coordinator of the pre-kindergarten program at the site and is committed to a cooperative effort with the new project coordinator. There is a parent council for family literacy participants and some form of minutes are taken. The pre-kindergarten program has a new parent board which will be involved with assisting with program development and ideas for getting more parent involvement. They have started a phone tree, plans for a play and craft days and the pre-k coordinator sees a way for this to fold into the family literacy project. In May, the pre-kindergarten program and the family literacy project will bring in a storyteller from Ohio to tell stories to the children and provide a workshop for parents.

The family literacy project intends to try to have a summer camp for parents and children, the whole family together in a summer program. There is also a pilot computer workshop project on tap for parent and child together. The project has enlisted the services of a consultant who developed this workshop. The workshop sees the computer as an intellectual tool and has the student build on previous information so that information flows from the student to computer rather than from computer to student as it does in electronic tutoring. The workshop instructs students how to create a computer program.

Students still receive transportation to and from the program. Students can work on the computers at Prairie State. Class levels are mixed with GED, pre-GED and ABE students. Books are only used as a framework, instruction is more process oriented. Instructors are currently looking for a methodology with various levels involved. Sometimes students who quickly pick up information are discouraged at the slower pace of the class. An intensive study group for students at higher levels has been suggested or perhaps an accelerated class. Child care is also provided and because of the level of participation there are a great number of infants in the nursery. The project is investigating possible options to alleviate the overflow. One of those options has been to consider a volunteer pool for child care from the parent council.

One of the goals of the family literacy project is really to make the most of all the resources available to families in its network. They would like to add the class for accelerated students, make the child care improvements, add a jazzercise/workout class for new mothers, open up the program to more people and increase knowledge about the program in the community. The coordinator is very committed to doing a needs assessment survey of the community they are charged with serving. There is also interest in surveying teachers and participants for their feedback on the current family participation programs in the schools including Family Enrichment and Family Literacy. Putting

together a survey planning committee that could become an ongoing group for feedback on new programs has been discussed.

Participants in the program are very enthusiastic and have noticed positive responses in their children. Members of the network point to the democratic philosophy of education, the courage of the students, the tutor training for parents and a "go and do it" philosophy.

FAMILY LITERACY SURVEY SUMMARY

Program Name: Prairie State College Family Literacy Project

Student Population:

- Parents and children in two school districts
 - one school - participants primarily Mexican-American
 - one school - participants primarily African-American
- economically disadvantaged families

Recruitment/Retention Methods:

- phone tree, buddy system (bring a friend) to get additional people to class
- summer camp
- special computer offerings (e.g. Spanish computer class, story teller)
- Family Literacy Advisory Council
- free transportation
- word of mouth

Staff Structure:

- family literacy coordinator
- classroom teachers
- child care staff

Curriculum:

- adult curriculum: ABE, GED, ESL - eclectic use of published materials and teacher-produced materials
- developmentally appropriate educational activities for children

Program Components:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Adult | • Child |
| • Adult and Child | • Economic Self-sufficiency |
| • Family Support Services | |

Program Activities:

- classes (ABE, GED, ESL, word processing, keyboarding)
- adult-child computer workshop (in English and in Spanish)
- field trips
- one-to-one tutoring
- parent council
- special events - such as storyteller

Male Involvement:

- a need
 - planned activities include: sports night, summer sport league, mentoring program

Ideas Suggested:

- establish an advisory council made up of program participants and take direction from them
- provide a class for accelerated GED students
- build and maintain links with all programs
- provide transportation
- help remove barriers so parents are empowered to meet their own education goals as well as supporting those of their children
- integrate problem-solving and critical thinking into programs

READY FOR READING
YEAR 2

Ready for Reading has continued to charge ahead in the provision of family literacy services to local communities in the Rend Lake College District. Although the program staff has decreased in size by one, the program has continued to expand, both in territory served by the remaining staff members and in families participating in the program. Indeed, Barbara Bauernfeind, Coordinator, has received several calls from agencies interested in having Ready for Reading staff conduct sessions for their participants.

The basic structure of the program remains the same, with three sessions being offered for adults and sometimes their children at libraries, in classrooms, and at community centers. The three sessions cover the importance of reading to children, activities to do with children to promote reading readiness, and a trip to the library. Participating families each receive a set of children's books and "graduate" with a library card of their own. At the sessions, parents learn about education opportunities available to them through the college, including: tutoring, GED classes, and vocational education classes.

Participants in the program are primarily the families involved in the local Head Start, At-Risk, or Pre-K programs. This year, Tina Grounds, family literacy trainer, has begun home visits at housing units in several communities. This technique has been a successful recruitment tool, especially where the community center is located adjacent to the housing. Tina suggests not making pre-arranged visits as they are not as successful as just "stopping by." Says Grounds, "I just knock on the door and ask if it is a convenient time to talk. If it isn't, I will return some other time. The home visits are really effective because of the personal contact. I had one very interesting situation -- I went to a home and the husband answered the door. The wife was in the tub, but said she wanted to talk to me and she told him to ask me to come back later. I did and he said she was still in the tub. When I went back later yet, she greeted me at the door. It turned out that she wanted to speak with me alone and wouldn't get out of the tub until he left."

To encourage families to attend the sessions, the literacy trainers often conduct "literacy activities" in the schools or at the community centers. The literacy activity sessions are done by the coordinator with the children. The literacy trainer models the literacy activities with the children, then gives information about the goals and purposes of the activities to the adults attending. The literacy trainer also encourages the adults to come to the other sessions.

Sessions continue to be offered only during the day. Night sessions were tried, but no one attended. To increase participation, the literacy trainers have begun calling potential

participants the night before a session. Lunch is also served to the children and adults volunteering in the classroom that day through the Pre-Kindergarten program. This incentive may partially account for increased participation of men. Home visits have also been responsible for increased male participation.

One crucial factor in the success of the program is the extensive network built throughout the community. The network continues to expand -- bringing in resources as well as participants. Laying the groundwork and building trust among the program staffs has sometimes been difficult. Ready for Reading staff has stressed that their program is designed to supplement not supplant the services offered by agencies they are networking with. In addition, Ready for Reading staff has worked hard to involve the staffs of the agencies with which they are working in the planning and development of the program. Building and maintaining a trusting relationship with other services providers has paid off with additional requests for Ready for Reading sessions.

As the staff looks into the future, they share a common vision of program expansion. The vision includes a program component for school-age children and their parents. This would be offered after school and would include tutoring for the children and adults, help for the parents so they can aid their children in completing their homework, babysitting for younger siblings, and transportation from home to the comfortable site at which it would take place. A component such as this would provide support for children who are already in school, engage parents as advocates for their school-age children, give parents and teachers an opportunity to meet in a non-threatening atmosphere, and complete the picture of a total family literacy program.

FAMILY LITERACY SURVEY SUMMARY

Program Name: Ready for Reading

Student Population:

- Parents and children enrolled in at-risk or Pre-Kindergarten program
- Children primarily 3-5 years old
- Families in public housing
- Seven communities in rural Southern Illinois

Recruitment Methods:

- door-to-door
- networking with organized programs
- special events at community centers
- newspaper coverage
- incentives

Staff Structure:

- three family literacy trainers (one for each county)
- literacy coordinator

Curriculum:

- Parents packets which include "tools" for reading
 - 3 children's books
 - corresponding activity sheets
 - pamphlets and brochures
 - information about adult education classes

Program Components:

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| • Adult | • Child |
| • Adult as Teacher | • Adult and child |

Program Activities:

- parental workshops on reading to children
- one-to-one tutoring for adults
- teacher/trainer models reading strategies
- library visits
- story hours

Male Involvement:

- minimal attendance, though participation is encouraged

Ideas Suggested:

- after school program for parents and children which would offer tutoring for both
- make program goal-oriented for both parent and child
- make GED programs open entry, open exit
- provide services in the community where participants live/use the community centers and building when available
- spend a lot of time networking and building

- relationships throughout the community
supplement services provided in the community

REACH OUT AND READ (ROAR)
Augustana Lutheran Church

It seems that the Reach Out and Read program at Augustana Lutheran Church (in cooperation with the Blue Gargoyle Social Service Agency) in Chicago's Hyde Park community takes the idea of the building blocks of learning very seriously.

The program has taken over the second floor of the church. The new children's activity room with its huge windows is full of light and has a beautiful new book shelf full of books. There is a small separate room with cribs for sleeping infants and toddlers. The staff and volunteers at this program are still perfecting the art of developing an efficient project on a shoestring. Even though some members of the ROAR team are volunteers, each person is an integral part of what is happening and are the "staff" of this program. In spite of the fact that grants have not materialized as they would have liked and their limited budget, ROAR has continued to roar and done so with flair.

Three of their students from the original pilot project in the summer of 1989 are still participating. ROAR has a new executive director and associate director to run the program and the "nursery staff/volunteer" base has expanded a bit and is really working hard to develop this aspect of the project, the results of which are witnessed in the revamped children's room. They are averaging six to nine children in the nursery at a time. Vacation from the public schools brings in older children, so the ROAR team has begun to create activities for them.

ROAR has two VISTA volunteers who now recruit for the program. They have updated their original flyer of a year ago to use as a tool. They have a flyer aimed at volunteers and another that addresses potential learners and their families. Door to door canvassing to find eligible and interested individuals is employed as well as outreach to schools, clinics, hospitals and where ever they think they can reach a person who needs what they have to offer.

The Parents as Teachers sessions are still operating. In fact, documentation of the sessions has been implemented; notes are taken. Learners and their tutors have started to use a dialogue journal. Learners and tutors write back and forth to each other in this journal format. The staff believes that the Parents as Teachers sessions give adults a chance to come out of their shells and talk which is most comfortable for them when they compare it to reading or writing. This way they can give input to the process. Each participant is given a book a month. The library is currently being restructured to improve its usage.

ROAR is currently attempting to develop a curriculum for and continue development of its program components (adult basic education, nursery and Parents as Teachers). A program committee has recently been established to assist with this venture. They would also like to institute an intake process to more closely identify the goals of participants and maintain student records. The closely knit network of ROAR continues to help adults address their literacy needs while attempting to have the ROAR program assist parents in the realization of the broader impact they have on their children's learning.

FAMILY LITERACY SURVEY SUMMARY

Program Name: Reach Out And Read (ROAR)

Student Population:

- Hyde Park area residents
- educationally disadvantaged families (adults generally below 6th grade reading level)

Recruitment Methods:

- referrals from Blue Gargoyle Social Service Agency
- door-to-door canvassing
- speaking engagements
- flyers

Staff Structure:

- two part-time paid staff persons
- two VISTA volunteers
- volunteers

Curriculum:

- ABE - Laubach based
- activity centers/mediated areas for children
- site generated materials

Program Components:

- | | |
|---------|--------------------|
| • Adult | • Adult As Teacher |
| • Child | • Adult and Child |

Program Activities:

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| • one-to-one tutoring | • stories |
| • writing class | • circle games |
| • dialogue journals | • art activities |
| • Parents As Teachers time | |

Male Involvement:

- two males currently participating

Ideas Suggested:

- pay for transportation
- give students a voice in their education
- make the atmosphere comfortable for learning
- build on the strengths of the students
- be creative

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Successful components and characteristics of the seven model sites were determined as part of the evaluation aspect of this project. Each of the sites received extensive technical assistance in the evaluation framework described in detail in *The Mechanics of Success for Families, Report #2, Evaluation and Resource Development News, V.4, No.3*. After introduction to the framework, model site staff chose one or more questions to examine throughout the course of the year. Preliminary results from each site are outlined below and samples of program tools and instruments can be found in Appendix A.

Bright Futures

The staff of Bright Futures chose to conduct a survey of parents of the children attending the Prekindergarten enrichment program. The survey was designed to elicit responses to the following critical questions:

- What services for children did the parents feel were most important?
- What would make adult services (particularly GED classes) more appealing?

Preliminary results of the survey revealed that parents felt they "were not pushed enough" to participate in classes.

CHOICES

The staff of CHOICES selected three areas of program and student assessment to concentrate on. Specifically, they designed a non-threatening, goal setting and assessment form to be filled out by shelter clients who participated in the educational services provided. Secondly, they began work on a procedure to determine the number of shelter clients who make contact with local adult education agencies and/or enroll in class. Unfortunately, new release forms must be designed for staff to implement this procedure. Finally, the staff is experimenting with several skills inventories designed to build self-esteem and indicate levels of vocational and educational preparedness. After the inventories are piloted, they will be adopted or adapted.

Joliet Jr. College

The curriculum for the PALS project, conducted through Joliet Jr. College was designed by a reading specialist. This reading specialist trained teachers to work with parents. To determine the effectiveness of this program structure, staff designed questionnaires for participants, teacher/facilitator, and the coordinator. Questionnaire results will be aggregated and compared.

John A. Logan/The Literacy Connection

Staff at the Literacy Connection is presently revising the Families Connecting for Learning Guidebook. This guidebook incorporates evaluation as an on-going process which is part of family learning. The guidebook will facilitate evaluation of the family, by the family. As part of the family self-evaluation process, Literacy Connection staff is experimenting with family writing portfolios.

Prairie State College Family Literacy Project

The staff at Prairie State had three guiding interests in the development of their evaluation system. These are outlined below:

1. Determine the interests and perceived needs of the adult family members of children in the school district;
2. Survey the classroom teachers to assess adult/parent participation in the classroom and interest in family literacy; and
3. Use the ILRDC adult questionnaire daily in adult education classes and keep this together with student work to document progress.

Preliminary results of the teacher survey indicate that there is still some resistance to adult participation in the classroom.

Ready For Reading/Rend Lake College

Staff at Ready for Reading was very interested in gauging community interest in family literacy programs to serve school age children and their parents. Thus, they designed a survey instrument and administered it randomly to households in two communities. Seventy-three surveys were completed and awareness of the college was raised by the personal contact between the interviewers and the families which participated.

The staff has also instituted a system of documentation for referrals made to GED, ABE, or vocational classes at the college.

Reach Out and Read/ROAR

In an effort to engage students in the evaluation progress, ROAR staff has designed interactive intake forms for use with adults and children. The forms are filled out together by the student and a staff person. Questions are open-ended and non-threatening, such as "What do you like to do with your family?"

In addition, ROAR is experimenting with the use of dialogue journals. The journals are shared between a student and his/her tutor. Eventually, this activity may prove useful for documenting learner progress.

CONCLUSION

As the work of the model family literacy sites has shown, evaluation can be a useful element in program planning and development. The framework suggested by the ILRDC has been incorporated swiftly into the evaluation systems of the seven model sites. The flexibility provided by the framework allows programs to measure student and program progress in a manner which captures the complexity of family literacy programs and the diversity of the students they serve. It is clear that the on-going incorporation of evaluation into program planning will result in identification of best practices in family literacy and a clear improvement of services to students.

APPENDIX A

EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRES

ADULT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How did you find out about the Pre-Kindergarten Program?
2. There are many parts to the Pre-Kindergarten for your child and you. I would like you to rate your feelings concerning the following: (like, dislike, unsure)

	L	D	U
<u>Classroom Activities</u>			
<u>Field Trips</u>			
<u>Evening Activities</u>			
<u>Classroom Visits</u>			
<u>Home Visits</u>			
<u>Resource Center (toys, books, make and take)</u>			
<u>Family Relation Classes</u>			
<u>GED Classes</u>			
<u>Saturday Workshops</u>			

3. What do you like about the program?
4. What do you dislike about the program?
5. I am going to read some parts of the Pre-Kindergarten. Please tell me where or how you would like to see improvements.

Classroom Activities

Evening Activities

Home Visits

Family Relation Classes

GED Classes

Resource Center

6. Part A. Do you have any ideas for additional activities that you would like included in the P-K Program? (Wait).

Part B (Probe)

less days a week

more days a week

full day preschool

more daytime activities

workshops

7. As part of the Pre-Kindergarten Program, there is the opportunity to participate in a GED program. Did you know that? _____ Were you interested? _____
Why? _____

Can I ask your opinion on how to make the GED Classes more interesting/appealing?

transportation

babysitting

convenient class times

How can it be more convenient?

What problems have existed in the past?

Classes when child is at school?

Day, Evening, Full, Half

Would you like anything changed about the classes? (Explain).

8. How can we serve you and your family better, with the Pre-Kindergart Program?
9. As a result of this program, has anything in your life changed?
10. As a result of this program, have you seen changes in your child or your relationship with your child?
11. How has this program helped you with your everyday activities at home, at work, or in the community?
12. What services would be helpful as your preschooler goes on to Kindergarten?
13. If a friend ask you about the program for their child, would you recommend it? Why/Why not? Good Things. What is wrong with it?
14. Are you currently employed? If so, where? What do you plan to be doing five years from now? School?

Participant _____ Project Name _____ Date _____

1. How did you learn about our program (check one)

Radio-TV _____ Flyers _____ Friend _____ Other _____

2. Activities you and your child enjoy _____

3. Questions/concerns we could help with _____

4. What do you expect to learn at these sessions _____

Cumulative Evaluation

Participant _____

Project Name _____ Presenter/Instructor _____

Date _____ Session _____

Was the session: (Check One)

Yes No

Useful _____
Organized _____

Was the session: (Check One)

Yes No

Good..... _____
Average..... _____
Poor..... _____
Did it meet your
expectations..... _____
Would you like
more of this
Programming..... _____*****
Cumulative Evaluation

Participant _____

Project Name _____ Presenter/Instructor _____

Date _____ Session _____

Was the session: (Check One)

Yes No

Useful _____
Organized _____

Was the session: (Check One)

Yes No

Good..... _____
Average..... _____
Poor..... _____
Did it meet your
expectations..... _____
Would you like
more of this



**THE
LITERACY
CONNECTION**

John A. Logan College
Carterville, Illinois 62918
(618) 985-3741, 549-7335, 542-8612
937-3438, 1-800-851-4720
Carbondale Office: 457-5551

Head Start Adult Basic Education Referral

(Check all that apply)

I am interested in improving my:

_____ **Reading**

_____ **Writing**

_____ **Basic Math**

_____ **I am interested in getting my GED.**

_____ **I am interested in family learning (adults and children together).**

_____ **I would like information about adult education programs for another family member.**

Other programs I'm interested in; questions or comments: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ **Message Number:** _____

I agree to release the above information to a representative from The Literacy Connection so that I can be contacted about free tutoring or other adult education services.

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Teacher/outreach worker signature _____ **Date** _____

Please return to the Social Services Coordinator

teacher's name _____

grade _____

school _____

FAMILY LITERACY PROJECT TEACHER SURVEY

Please take 5 minutes to answer these questions which will help us to develop an effective family literacy program.

1) How many children do you have in your class? _____

2) How many parents of children in your class did you see this past school year in the following situations: (list number of parents)

Parent-Teacher conferences _____

Field Trips _____

Observing your class _____

Participating in _____

Volunteering in your classroom _____ parent/child workshops _____

Attending adult education classes (GED/ABE or ESL) _____

Attending Special events (such as fun fair) _____

Attending parent meetings _____

Disciplinary meetings _____

Other, (list) _____

3) How important do you feel it is that parents participate in the following activities:

	Very important 5	4	3	2	Not important 1
Parent-teacher conferences	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Field Trips	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Observing your class	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
volunteering in your classroom	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Part. in parent/child workshops (such as computer workshop or family story time)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Attending adult education classes	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Attending special events	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Attending parent meetings	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Disciplinary meetings	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
other : _____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

4) What kind of activities would most meet the needs of the parents of your students in your opinion?

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| _____ GED/pre-GED classes | _____ Jazzercise |
| _____ Skills review (preparing for college or voc. sch.) | _____ parenting |
| _____ English as a Second Language | _____ play groups (parent/child) |
| _____ vocational evaluations | _____ computer workshops |
| _____ office technology (word processing) | _____ Family Story Time (reading) |
| _____ other vocational training | _____ activities to build self-esteem |
| | _____ other _____ |

5) What are some of the specific needs your students have which a parent program could help with? (please answer on back with any additional comments)

NEEDS ASSESSMENT--HOUSEHOLD

Name of adults living in household:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Name and phone # of someone who would know if you move _____

Educational Background

Last grade completed 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____

Would you like to: improve your reading _____
improve your math _____
complete GED diploma _____
receive job training _____
pursue a college degree _____

Are you aware of local educational programs to help you in these areas? yes _____ no _____

If yes, what kept you from participating? _____

_____ embarrassment	_____ feel too young
_____ fear	_____ time classes scheduled
_____ transportation	_____ lack of family support
_____ child care	_____ no time to prepare for classes
_____ feel too old	_____ feel the GED is not going to help me

If available, would either or both of the following be beneficial for allowing you to take classes? transportation _____
child care _____

Are you or your family on any assistance program? Mark all that apply.

AFDC	_____
food stamps	_____
medical card	_____
Gen. Assist.	_____
other	_____

How many children live in your household? _____

Please list:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

If children are not yet in kindergarten, are they in a preschool program? yes _____ no _____

If yes, what program? _____

If you have school-age children, please answer these questions:

Do you feel as though one or more of your children could benefit from tutoring? yes _____ no _____

Have you ever had your child or children tutored? yes _____ no _____

If yes, did it benefit child or children? yes _____ no _____

If you have never had your child tutored but feel that your child could have benefitted from it, what were your reasons for not pursuing it?

If your child or children could be tutored free of charge, would you be interested? yes _____ no _____

If yes, what time of day would be best?

3 - 5 p.m.	_____
5 - 7 p.m.	_____
7 - 9 p.m.	_____

Would you be willing to come to tutoring with your child? yes _____ no _____

How many days of the week would you be willing to come to tutoring with your child?

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____ as many as it takes _____

Date _____

CHILD INFORMATION FORM

Child's name _____

Date of Birth _____

What name do you call your child? _____

Parent's Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

BROTHERS AND SISTERS:

Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Name _____

Date of Birth _____

1. What makes your child happy?
2. What does your child like to do at home?
3. What makes your child sad or upset?
4. What helps your child feel better?
4. Is your child afraid of anything?
5. How does your child tell you what he or she needs?
 - When he or she wants to play with something?
 - When he or she is hungry?
 - When he or she is tired?
 - When he or she has to go to the bathroom?
6. Is there anything you want to tell us about your child?
7. Is there anything you want to ask us about the ROAR nursery?